

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 12335 281006Z

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2795

INFO AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

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AFDROUGHT

SUBJ: FOOD AID FOR NIGER

1. FOLLOWING MESSAGE SENT DABELL/OSRO TO PROSPECTIVE DONORS
AS OSRO 1469, NIGER FOOD DEFICIT 1975/76 CROP YEAR:

A. NIGER PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARY AMBASSADOR POISSON FROM BRUSSELS
RECENTLY VISITED FAO AND WFP TO EXPLAIN PRESIDENT'S APPREHENSION
REGARDING ANTICIPATED FOOD SHORTAGES IN NIGER AND TO REQUEST
FAO/OSRO HELP IN APPEALING TO DONORS FOR FOOD AID.

B. ALTHOUGH RATHER EARLY TO PREDICT THE RESULT OF THIS YEARS
HARVEST THE ERRATIC RAINFALL AND PEST DAMAGE NECESSITATED SEVERAL
REPLANTINGS IN MUCH OF THE COUNTRY. THE CONSENSUS OF THE UNDP'S
INFORMAL MEETING OF DONOR REPRESENTATIVES HELD ON JULY 25 AND
BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE UP TO THAT DATE WAS THAT HARVEST
WOULD BE MEDIOCRE. SINCE THEN THE RAINFALL IN THE FIRST TWENTY
DAYS OF AUGUST REGISTERED A SERIOUS DEFICIT AND WILL ALMOST
CERTAINLY RESULT IN VERY POOR HARVESTS IN THE LOWER RAINFALL
AREAS OF NIGER.

C. OSRO PLANS TO SEND SMALL EVALUATION MISSION TO NIGER IN
EARLY OCTOBER TO WORK WITH LOCAL STAFF AND DONOR REPRESENTATIVES TO
ESTIMATE HARVEST RESULTS. IT IS EXPECTED THAT GOVERNMENT WILL
REQUEST A MULTIDONOR MISSION TO ASSESS NEEDS AND MAKE RECOMMEN-
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PAGE 02 ROME 12335 281006Z

DATIONS ON FOOD AID FOR 1975/76. FIRM RECOMMENDATIONS ON

LEVEL OF AID BASED ON HARVEST ESTIMATES MAY THUS NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL NOVEMBER/DECEMBER.

D. MEANWHILE IT WOULD SEEM PRUDENT AT THIS STAGE ALREADY TO PLAN SOME FOOD AID FOR EARLIEST DELIVERY POSSIBLE TO AVOID PORT CONGESTION AND OTHER SEASONAL PROBLEMS LATER. THE MDM RECOMMENDATIONS LAST DECEMBER FOR 75,000 TONS OF CEREALS TO MEET THE 1974/75 NEEDS HAVE PROVED REMARKABLY ACCURATE. THE 1974 HARVEST WAS ABOUT NORMAL AND IT SEEMS CERTAIN WILL NOT BE EXCEEDED THIS YEAR.

E. OSRO THUS RECOMMENDS DONORS TO PLAN NOW FOR EARLY DELIVERY OF AT LEAST THE SAME QUANTITIES OF AID PREFERABLY SORGHUM THAT THEY PROVIDED DURING 1974/75 AND MAKE ADJUSTMENTS FOR LATER DELIVERIES WHEN HARVEST RESULTS CAN BE RELIABLY ESTIMATED. WE WILL CONTINUE TO KEEP YOU INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS AND WOULD WELCOME YOUR REACTIONS TO THIS RECOMMENDATION.VOLPE

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